LITTLE JIM PARK

How the Workers of Pittsburg's Painter's Row Made a Park of Their Own in the Shadow of Tenements and Steel Mills.

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I had taken a car over to Painter's Mill and Painter's Row and got off at the farther end of a dingy, smoke-hung settlement. I went through and about the houses which the great Carnegie Company leases to its workers (with no trouble about collecting the rent, for that is taken from their wages),—houses so close to the mill some even wall to wall with it, that they share almost equally with the mill its smoke and grime and clangor, —houses which had been as unsanitary and disease-breeding as any I saw offered the poor even by hardened slum landlords. And then, after I had gone through the rows of houses, at the end of the settlement nearest Pittsburg, I came upon a sudden contrast. It was an open space, with a portion of it canopied, and over the canopy this black-lettered sign:

LITTLE JIM PARK.

It wasn't much of a park—just a little bit of ground, in area hardly more than an average city lot, with a second-hand iron fence around it, with rough benches, a pavement of tan-bark and a few flower beds bordered with whitewashed bricks. A poor, pitiably insignificant little place, yet startlingly pleasant when compared with its surroundings. On the one side, with a row of dreary houses between, rumbled and belched the mill; at its back was a littered waste; at its front, across the street, was a steep hill topped by the ramshackle houses of Stewart's Row, and this hill was muddy, stubbled over with lank dead weeds, gullied with foul-looking, foul-smelling streams of waste water and garbage.

I entered the park, sat down beneath the canopy, and my imagination proceeded to explain how the park had been established. Its name was a certain clue. "Little Jim Park," that faintly reeked with ultra-sentimentality. Some rich woman had been emotionally stirred by the stories of the cheerless life of tenement children, the Little Jims and the Little Marys; she had shamed to see how especially cheerless to the life of the children of Painter's Row; she had established the park, and given it as title the more or less generic name by which tenement children are known to sentiment, "Little Jim."

I had just credited the park to my Lady Bountiful,—had just finished with Romance, when Realism sauntered into the park and took the other end of my bench. He was a working man, whose decent clothes and white collar told me this was his day off. His coat collar was turned up, his slouch hat pulled down. One jaw stood out with a quid of tobacco, and his face was deeply wrinkled. He was perhaps twenty-one.

"Won't you tell me," I asked, "who gave this park to Painter's Row?"

He smiled good-naturedly at me. "Who give it? Nobody give it."

"Then how did you get it?"

"We took it," said he.

"Took it! But the name——?"

"Oh, we just took that, too."

There was something new in the park-building line. I drew nearer. "I wish you'd tell me about it," I asked.

"Sure, I'll tell," said he, and I could detect pride in the park in both the young fellow's tone and manner. He leaned his quid down upon the tan-bark. "Used to be a little old church standing here. Little Jim church they called it, queer name for a church, wasn't it? Damned if I know why they named it that. For the last five or six years it wasn't used at all, and last spring it just collapsed. The Hunkies come scrambling over it and carried away all the wood to burn, and what was left was certainly a mess.

"Well, I don't know just who started the idea, I guess it was a John Donahue and Jim Leary (they works around the rolls in the mill), but pretty soon a lot of us guys had decided it would be great if we could clear up the place and make a park. So we started at the job, and when any of us was laid off over at the mill we was workin' here. The iron fence we got when they tore down part of Painter's Row—it was just old junk you know; the bricks 'round the flower beds were some left over from building a brewery down the street, we just helped ourselves to 'em; the arch over the gate we made out of an old pipe; the flag-pole there used to be a pump handle of a pump down on the river—we swiped that; the ball on top of the flag-pole a carpenter give us. We chipped in and bought this tent, and we chipped in and bought a flag. The first one was whipped to pieces by the wind and we had to chip in and buy another before the summer was over. Then we set out some flowers, splashed around with some paint and whitewash, and the park was done. The name of the church seemed sorter to belong to the place, so we called it 'Little Jim Park.'

"The park was what you might say opened on Decoration Day when the kids come in and sang and performed. It was a great place for the kids to play all summer, and a fine place for us to sit around of evenings and chin and sing. Never had nothing of the sort here before, you know. But the big show here at Little Jim Park was Old Home Week, when we had it all fixed up with bunting and had it lit up of nights. I guess the park ain't much to look at just now, for the geraniums have all been took up, and the fellows are takin' care of 'em in their houses through the winter. But in summer, when the flowers are out, and things are fixed up, I tell you what Little Jim Park looks mighty good to Painter's Row!"

Somehow, when he had finished, this little park, a park by the people, seemed to be a thousand fold more beautiful, a thousand fold more significant. It and the great mill stood there in striking contrast; the mill and the houses expressing the indifference of the company to its human machines, the park the spontaneous expression of a great native desire, though choked down by long hours and the general oppresive dinginess, the unreaching, outreaching desire of the people for light, for air, for natural happiness, for development.

The Argument

When it is known that its power to strengthen the system and build up the body is why Father John's Medicine cures colds, it will be understood why it is so valuable as a tonic and for driving the impurities out of the system. It feeds the tissues and makes strength; prevents pneumonia and consumption—not a patent medicine; pure and wholesome—50 years in use.

THE LADY OF THE HEAVENS.

(Continued.)

He advanced into the shadow of the tree, took off his hat with a flourish and bowed. Then as she made no answer to these salutations, but only searched him with her gray eyes, he began to speak in jerky sentences.

"I hope you have slept well, Rachel; I am glad to see you looking so fresh. I was afraid that you would be overtired after your long day. You rode many miles. Of course what you found at Ramah must have been a great shock to you. I want to explain to you quietly that I am not in the least to blame about that terrible business. It was those accursed Zulus who exceeded their orders."

So he went on, pausing between each remark for an answer, but no answer came. At length he stopped, confused, and Rachel, lifting the assegai, examined its blade, and asked him suddenly:

"Whose blood is on this spear? Yours?"

"A little of it, perhaps," he answered. "That fool of a Kaffir flourished it about after your father shot him and cut me with it accidentally," and he pointed to the wound on his face.

Rachel bent down and began to rub the blade against the foot of the bench as though to clean it. He did not know what she meant by this act, yet it frightened him.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

She paused in her task and said, looking up at him:

"I do not wish that your blood should defile mine even in death," and went on with her cleansing of the spear.

He watched her for a little while, then broke out:

"Curse it all! I don't understand you. What do you mean?"

"Ask the Zulus," she answered. "They understand me, and they will tell you. Or if there is no time, ask my father and mother—afterwards."

Ishmael paled visibly, then recovered himself with an effort and said:

"Let us finish with all this witch-doctor nonsense, and come to business. I had nothing to do with the death of your parents, indeed I was wounded in trying to protect them——"

"Then why do I see both of them behind you with such accusing eyes?" she asked quietly.

He started, turned his head and stared about him.

"You won't frighten me like that," he went on. "I am not a silly Kaffir, so give it up. Look here, Rachel, you know I have loved you for a long while, and though you treat me so badly I love you more than ever now. Will you marry me?"

"I told you last night that you would be dead in a few days. Do not waste your time in talking of marriage. Sit in the dust and repent your sins before you go down into the dust."

"All right, Rachel. I know you are a good prophet——"

"Noie, too, is a good prophet," she broke in reflectively. "You used the Zulus to kill her father and mother also, did you not? Do you remember a message that she gave you from Seyapi one evening down by the sea, before you kidnapped me to be a bait to trap me in Zululand?"

"Remember!" he answered, scowling. "Am I likely to forget her deviliries? If you are the witch she is the familiar, the black ehlose (spirit) who whispers in your ears. Had she not gone I should never have caught you."

"But she will come back—although I fear not in time to bid you farewell."

"You tell me that I shall soon be dead," he exclaimed, ignoring this talk of Noie. "Well, I am not frightened. I don't believe you know anything about it, but if you are right the more reason I should live while I can. According to you, Rachel, we have no time to waste in a long engagement. When is it to be?"

"Never!" she answered, contemptuously, "in this or any other world. Never! Why, you are hateful to me; when I see you, I shiver as though a snake crawled across my foot, and when I look at your hands they are red with blood, the blood of my parents and of Noie's parents, and of many others. I will not be touched by a hand that is red with blood. That is my answer."

He looked at her a while, then said: "You seem to forget that I am only asking for what I can take. No one can see you or hear you here, except my women. You are in my power at last, Rachel Dove."

"Look," she said, pointing to an eagle that circled so high in the blue heavens above them that it seemed no larger than a hawk, "that bird is more in your power and nearer to you than I am. Before you laid a finger on me I would find a dozen means of death, but that I tell you again you will never live to do."

For a while Ishmael was silent, weighing her words in his mind. Apparently he could find no answer to them, for when spoke again it was of another matter.

"You say that you hate me, Rachel. If so, it is because of that accursed fellow, Darrien—whom you don't hate. Well, he, at any rate, is in my power. Now look here. You've got to make your choice. Either you stop all this nonsense and become my wife, or—your friend Darrien dies. Do you hear me?"

Rachel made no answer. Now for the first time she was really frightened, and feared lest her speech should show it.

"You have been through a lot," he went on, slowly; "you are tired out, and don't know what you say, and you believe that I killed the old people, which I didn't, and, of course, that has set you against me. Now, I don't want to be rough, or to hurry you, especially as I have plenty of things to see about before we are married. So I give you three days. If you don't change your mind at the end of them, the young man dies, that's all, and afterwards we will see whether or no you are in my power. Oh! you needn't stare. I've gone too far to turn back and I don't mind a few extra risks. Meanwhile make yourself easy, dear Richard shall be well looked after, and I won't bother you with any more love-making. That can wait."

Rachel rose from her seat and pointed with the spear to the door in the wall.

"Go!" she said.

"All right, I am going, Rachel. Good-bye till this time three days. I hope my women will make you as comfortable as possible in this rough place. Ask them for anything you want. Good-bye, Rachel," and he went, bolting the wall door behind him.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Three Days.

He was gone, his presence had ceased to poison the air, and, the long strain over, Rachel gave a gasp of relief. Then she sat down upon the bench and began to think. Her position and that of Richard, was desperate; it seemed scarcely possible that they could escape with their lives, for if he died, she would die also—as to that she was quite determined. But at least they had three days, and who could say what would happen in three days? For instance, they might escape somehow, the Providence in which she believed might intervene, or the Zulus might come to seek her, if they only knew where she was gone. Oh! why had she not brought a guard of them with her to Ramah? At least they would never have insulted her, and Ishmael's shrift would have been short.

She wondered why he had given her three days. A reason suggested itself to her mind. Perhaps he believed what she had told him—that she was as safe from him as the eagle in the air—and was sure that the only way to snare her was by using Richard as a lure, in other words, by threatening to murder him. It is true that he could have brought the matter to a head at once, but then, if she remained obdurate, he must carry out his threat, and this, she believed, he was afraid to do unless it was absolutely forced upon him. Doubtless he had reflected that in three days she might weaken and give way.

Whilst Rachel brooded thus the door in the wall opened, and through it came three women, who saluted her respectfully, and announced that they were sent to clean the hut, and attend upon her. Rachel took stock of them carefully. Two of them were young, ordinary, good-looking Kaffirs, but the third was between thirty and forty, and no longer attractive, having become old early, as natives do. Moreover, her face was sad and sympathetic. Rachel asked her her name. She answered that it was Mami, and that they were all the wives of Ibubesi.

The women went about their duties in the hut in silence, and a while afterwards announced that all was made clean, and that they would return presently with food. Rachel answered that it was not necessary that three of them should be put to so much trouble. It would be enough if Mami came. She desired to be waited on by Mami alone, her sisters need not come any more.

They all three saluted again, and said that she should be obeyed; the two younger ones with alacrity. To Rachel it was evident that these women were much afraid of her. Her reputation had reached them, and they shrank from this task of attending on the mighty Inkosazana of the Zulus in her cage, not knowing what evil it might bring upon them.

An hour later the door was unbolted, and Mami reappeared with the food that had been very carefully cooked. Rachel ate of it, for she was determined to grow strong again, she who might need all her strength, and while she ate talked to Mami, who squatted on the ground before her. Soon she drew her story from her. The woman was Ishmael's first Kaffir wife, but he had never cared for her, and against all law and custom she was discarded and made a slave. Even some of her cattle had been taken from her and given to other wives. So her heart was bitter against Ishmael, and she said that although once she was proud to be the wife of a white man, now she wished that she had never seen his face.

Here, then, was material ready to Rachel's hand, but she did not press the matter too far at this time. Only she said that she wished Mami to stay with her after the evening meal, and to sleep in her hut, as she was not accustomed to be alone at night. Mami replied that she would do so gladly, if Ibubesi allowed it, although she was not worthy of such honor.

As it happened, Ishmael did allow it, for he thought that he could trust this old drudge, and told her to act as a spy upon Rachel, and report to him all that she said or did. Very soon Rachel found this out and warned her against obeying him, since if she did so it would come to her knowledge, and then great evil would fall on one who betrayed the words of the Inkosazana.

Mami answered that she knew it, and that Rachel need not be afraid. Any tale would do for Ishmael, whom she hated. Then, saying little herself, Rachel encouraged her to talk, which Mami did freely. So she heard some news. She learned, for instance, that the whole town of Mafooti, whereof Ibubesi was chief, which counted some sixty or seventy heads of families, was much disturbed by the events of the last few days. They did not like the Inkosazana being brought there, thinking that where she went the Zulus would follow, and as they were of Zulu blood themselves, they knew what that meant. They were alarmed at the deaths of the white sky-doctor, who was called Shouter, and his wife, with which Ibubesi had something to do, for they feared lest they should be held responsible for their blood. They objected to the imprisonment of the white chief, Dario, among them, because "he had hurt no one, and was under the mantle of the Inkosazana, who was a spirit, not a woman," and who had warned them that if any harm came to her or to him, death would be their reward. They were angry, also, because Ibubesi had killed one of them in some quarrel about the chief Dario at Ramah. Still, they were so much afraid of Ibubesi, who was a great tyrant, that they did not dare to interfere with him and his plans, lest they should lose their cattle, or, perhaps, their lives. So they did not know what to do. As for Ibubesi himself, he was actively engaged in strengthening the fortification of the place; even the old people and the children were being forced to carry stones to the walls, from which it was evident that he feared some attack.

When Rachel had gathered this and much other information concerning Ishmael's past and habits, she asked Mami if she could convey a message from her to Richard. The woman answered that she would try on the following morning. So Rachel told her to say that she was safe and well, but that he must watch his footsteps, as both of them were in great danger. More she did not dare to say, fearing lest Mami should betray her, or be beaten till she confessed everything. Then, as there was nothing more to be done, Rachel lay down and slept as best she could.

The next day passed in much the same fashion as the first had done. For the most of it Rachel sat under the tree in the walled court, companioned only by her terrible thoughts and fears. Nobody came near her, and nothing happened. In the morning Mami went out, and returning at the dinner hour, told Rachel that she had seen Ishmael, who had questioned her closely as to what the Inkosazana had done and said, to which she replied that she had only eaten and slept, and invoked the spirits on her knees. As for words none had passed her lips. She had not been able to get near the huts where Dario was in prison, as Ishmael was watching her. For the rest, the work of fortification went on without cease, even Ishmael's own wives being employed thereon.

In the afternoon Mami went out again and did not return till night, when she had much to tell. To begin with, while the sentry was dozing, being wearied with carrying stones to the wall, she had managed to approach the fence of the hut where Richard was confined. She said that he was walking up and down inside the fence with his hands tied, and she had spoken to him through a crack in the reeds, and given him Rachel's message. He listened eagerly, and bade her tell the Inkosazana that he thanked her for her words; that he, too, was strong and well, though much troubled in mind, but the future was in the hands of the Heavens, and that she must keep a high heart. Just then the sentry woke up, so Mami could not wait to hear any more.

That evening, however, a lad who had been sent out of the town to drive in some cattle, had returned with the tidings which she, Mami, heard him deliver to Ibubesi with her own ears.

He said that whilst he was collecting the oxen, a ringed Zulu came upon him who from his manner and bearing he took to be a great chief, although he was alone, and seemed to be tired with walking. The Zulu had asked him if it were true that the Inkosazana and the white chief Dario were in prison at Mafooti, and when he hesitated about replying, threatened him with his assegai, saying he would cut out his heart unless he told the truth. Then being frightened, the lad said that it was true; that they had been brought thither from Ramah. The Zulu replied that he knew it as he had just come from Ramah, where he had seen strange things, and spoken with a man of Ibubesi's whom he found dying in the garden of the house. Then he had given him this message:

"Say to Ibubesi that I know all his wickedness, and that if the Inkosazana is harmed, or a drop of the blood of the white chief, Dario, is shed, I will destroy him and everything that lives in his town down to the rats. Say to him also that he cannot escape, as already he is ringed in by the children of the Shouter, who have come back and are watching him."

The lad had asked who it was that sent such a message, whereon he answered, "I am the Horn of the Black Bull; I am the Trunk of the Elephant; I am the Mouth of Dingaan."

Then straightway he turned and departed at a run towards Zululand. Moreover, Mami described the man in the words of the lad, and Rachel thought that he could be none other than Tamboosa, whom she had commanded to follow her with the white ox. Mami added that when he received this message Ibubesi seemed much disturbed, though to his people he declared that it was all nonsense, as Dingaan's Mouth would not come alone, or deliver the King's word to a boy. But the people thought otherwise, and murmured among themselves, fearing the terrible vengeance of Dingaan.

(To be Continued.)

LENTEN MUSIC IN CHURCHES

Interesting Programs Will be Rendered by Talented Musicians.

A Lenten organ recital will be held at the South church at 4 o'clock, Monday afternoon. Mrs. Elmer Beardsley will be assisted by William H. Joy, baritone. The music will be by modern composers, and will include a suite for the organ, by Homer N. Hartlett; Grieg's "Album Leaf," Harris "Fantasia On Church Chimes," Parker's Romanza" and other selections. Mr. Joy will sing Buck's "Judge Me, O God," and Woodman's "Out of the Deep."

The choir of the First Congregational church give their customary monthly song service to-morrow afternoon. The program is made from compositions of F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy, the one hundredth anniversary of whose birth is being celebrated this year. Service is at 4:30, with organ recital at 4:15. The choir are: Miss Sylvia Marcella Elcock, soprano; Mrs. Charles D Davis, contralto; Mr. Frederick D. Wallace, tenor; Mr Robert Clarke, bass; Miss Jennie Curtis Hawley, organist.